

A PAINFUL POSITION.

EVERYONE must feel the greatest sympathy with a private individual on whom for the nonce publicity is thrust, even though he be distinguished from his fellows by merely the label of a number, and who is subjected to the plainest outspoken criticism in the newspapers, which he may be sure is read with the keenest interest by friends, foes, and the public generally. Such is the fate of any college man of Oxford or Cambridge who becomes one of "the Eight" of his University. Study the minutely conscientious professional criticisms on the unhappy (temporarily) Oxonians and Cantabs engaged in practising for the great annual competition. The Oxford men occasionally "pick up the work rather well"; but in their stroke there is "a lack of rhythm." Unfortunate "Numbers Three and Five" (they're no longer men; they're only numbers, like convicts) "swing out of the boat"; and "bow" (i.e. "bow oar," but this distinction, such as it is, is better than being merely a number), "failing to keep time," aids his confederates in causing "the boat to roll about." Subsequently (poor souls!) their "form began to deteriorate," and this happened not far from the "Craven" (*absit omen!*) "Steps." Then, when they come to an end of their practice, their "finish" having been "far from good" (alas!), "the majority of the men were much distressed." "Much distressed," indeed! Nonsense, they must have been highly delighted. Of course, they would not so express themselves, and, no doubt, implored their trainer, with tears in their eyes, to let them go on practising for another hour or two. "Distressed!" Not they. Precious glad to get it over and to retire for their evening meal, limited.

And the Cantabs; what of them? Why, they were, so to speak, in the same boat with the Oxonians. They did not "make a particularly good commencement," and "the finish of the stroke was clipped." Quite different this from a "clipping good stroke." Then the men "seemed unable to continue their good form." Wretched galley slaves! And "they didn't keep proper time." One of them, "Number Four," appeared on this occasion to be the ghost of himself, as he "rowed without life"; and not only so, but he "failed to use his slide, and generally spoilt the appearance of the crew." How pleased "Number Four" must have been when he read this! What wonder if he had chucked the whole thing up, and disappeared, only to be remembered as a "Four gone conclusion!"

By the time this "appreciation" sees the light of publication, no doubt both crews will have vastly improved, and even "Number Four," reconciled to his lot, will have become a shining ornament



THOUGHT THEY WERE LIGHT BLUE!

Mrs. Newigned (who has heard that her husband has a sneaking regard for Cambridge Sausages, and means to delight him with some for breakfast). "AFTER ALL, THEY APPEAR VERY MUCH OF THE COLOUR OF ORDINARY ONES, DO THEY NOT?"

to the boat's crew. May the better crew win! Hard lines, to work and toil, be bullied and badgered, be severely handled in the press, and then to lose! Would not a "dead heat" produce a lively glow of satisfaction in the eighteen university hearts? "So," as Mr. Mantalini observed, "both," if there were a dead heat, would be "right and neither wrong, upon my life and soul, O demmit!"

BEER AND FOR BEER.

(A Sketch of the future.)

SCENE.—The bar of the "Cat and Cucumber." Enter a girl of uncertain age.

G. O. U. A. A pot of four 'arf.

Barman (licensed by the L.C.C.) Where's your birth certificate?

G. O. U. A. I am seventeen and four months old. Let's 'ave the beer.

Barman. Daren't do it without the birth certificate.

G. O. U. A. Birth certificate be blowed!

'Ere's my marridge lines — I've been married more than a year.

Barman. Married! Then you'll have to get an order from a magistrate. Very sorry.

G. O. U. A. (going). I do call this 'ard! When I gets 'ome my old man'll most likely whop me.

Barman. Then apply for a Separation Order, as is your undoubted right. Then I'll serve you with pleasure under the Married Woman's Property Act. Good night.

A NICE COMPLIMENT.—A grand night for "a Complimentary Concert" is "the night before Larry was stretched," or, rather, on the Eve of the University Boat-Race, which is not very remotely connected with "stretchers." There is a strong Committee at work, and "if music hath charms," the names of the sweet singers and versatile vocalists put down for Mr. BEAUCHAMP's concert are sufficient guarantee that the entertainment will produce notes of considerable value to the complimented one. *Soit.*

THE BOOK OF BEAUTY.

A GREAT THOUGHT FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR.

SECOND SERIES.

III.—THE ELIZABETH SECTION.

[With acknowledgments to the respective Authors of those popular works, "Elizabeth and her German Garden" and "The Visits of Elizabeth." It will be seen that extracts from the former's Diary and from the latter's Letters are given alternately, the younger Elizabeth being supposed to arrive on a visit to the elder Elizabeth about the 7th of the month.]

MARCH 1ST.—I am writing this in my dear garden with the thermometer at fifteen below zero Centigrade. A tumultuous North-wind, with a kiss of East in it, is blowing straight off the Baltic, bringing up faint delicious odours of sea-iceicles and frozen Finn. I like these better than the smell of hyacinths, which seems to me too assertive. I often ask myself what order of mind it is that prefers new spring dresses and a town-flat to precious solitude and communion with a botanical dictionary. I open my treasure at random and read: *Galanthus*, *Gale*, *Galeobdolon*, *Galeopsis*, *Galingale*, *Gardenia*, *Garlic*, *Gastrium*. I shall send for whole trucks of these and have them planted in masses all over the carriage-drive. I wish I were less ignorant about their symptoms, but I cannot trust to the gardener, whose imagination does not rise above artichokes, which he talks of training up the sun-dial.

What a lovely solitary February it has been, with the virgin snow up to the bedroom windows and the crocuses waiting their time, all snug and warm under their eider-down quilt. As I look back to the day when I married the Man of War, with a cheerful carelessness of consequences, and no guarantee of a garden at all, and the prospect of his constant company, I wonder at my temerity. But it has worked out admirably; and surely there are few women who can enjoy their husband's absence with such pure delight, and yet tolerate his presence with such equanimity.

And now ELEANOR FORBES must needs ask for her girl ELIZABETH to pay me a visit for the sake of her German. I do hope she will not be too exacting and want society and tea-parties. The only rule of hospitality which I really understand is the one about speeding the parting guest. However, I hear she is very innocent and *ingénue*, and so she ought to be fond of flowers. She may even have a soul, and be able to talk about the easier poets.

5TH.—*Château Chasse-Bébé*. Dearest Mamma,—I leave here to-morrow. I wish I hadn't got to stay with Gräfin ELIZABETH. I know they won't any of them have waists, except the men, and they eat their food even worse than the French, and can't say nice things to make up for it. Still, it's time I left here anyway. Some of the men are so absent-minded, and keep on proposing to me in the billiard-room (not the English kind, you know), and whole heaps of the 99th *Chasseurs* have pinched me in corridors and places, and I don't think this is quite respectful, do you, Mamma? And it is so awkward, because CÉLESTINE notices the marks on my arms when she is drying me after my tub, and this makes her very patronising and hinty, and the stuffing I put into my bedroom key-hole because of the draught keeps falling out, I can't think why. Two duels have been fought for some reason or other, I don't know what, in the deer-park and one in the middle of a *Ralli de Papier*. Nobody was hurt, of course, but it makes people look awfully sheepish, and I'm sure it's time I left. —I am picking up some new gowns from ROSALIE'S to astonish the Fatherland, though I don't know what the nearest garrison town is or whether they have fleets and things on the sea there, and goodnight, dear Mamma,

Your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

8TH.—I have hardly had time to discover whether ELIZABETH has a soul, but her dinner-gown and general attitude do not encourage this hope. I am a little afraid that she expected a

house-party, or at least an officer or two to take her in. I may be obliged to send for the Man of War to amuse her. It sounds improbable, but in his heavy negative way he likes a young girl without ideas or yearning intelligence.

One thing that struck me as a deplorable revelation of her character was a remark that she made about some women who bored her ("stuffy people," she called them) on one of her visits; "nothing," she said, "rustled nicely when they walked, and they had no scent on." Unfortunately she allows no such defect in her own toilette, and the scent she "has on" quite overpowers the pure fragrance of my snowdrops, besides being a detestable thing in itself. I even sigh for the Man of War's tobacco, and look forward to an afternoon with my artificial manures as a corrective.

I asked her the usual question at night—"You are not afraid of sleeping alone?" "Oh, no," she said, "I'm used to ghosts; there were whole stacks of them at Norman Tower in the passages, and a funny old thing asked me to join them and he would take care of me, but I thought it would be such shivery work in the middle of the night." I am afraid ELIZABETH'S mother is not careful enough in her choice of houses for this young person to stay in. Girls with such beautifully childlike minds are often too unsuspecting of evil.

11TH.—*Schloss Blumendam*. Dearest Mamma,—I can't imagine why you sent me here. It's been the stuffiest week I ever had. I'm the whole house-party in myself, and not a man of any kind in the place except the coachman who's married and the gardener who's engaged to the cook. It's so depressing, and I think CÉLESTINE means to go out of her mind. The Gräfin only has two dresses, and talks all day of nothing but flowers and manures, and have I read any good books lately, and of course I haven't, and I can't even think of any names to pretend with.

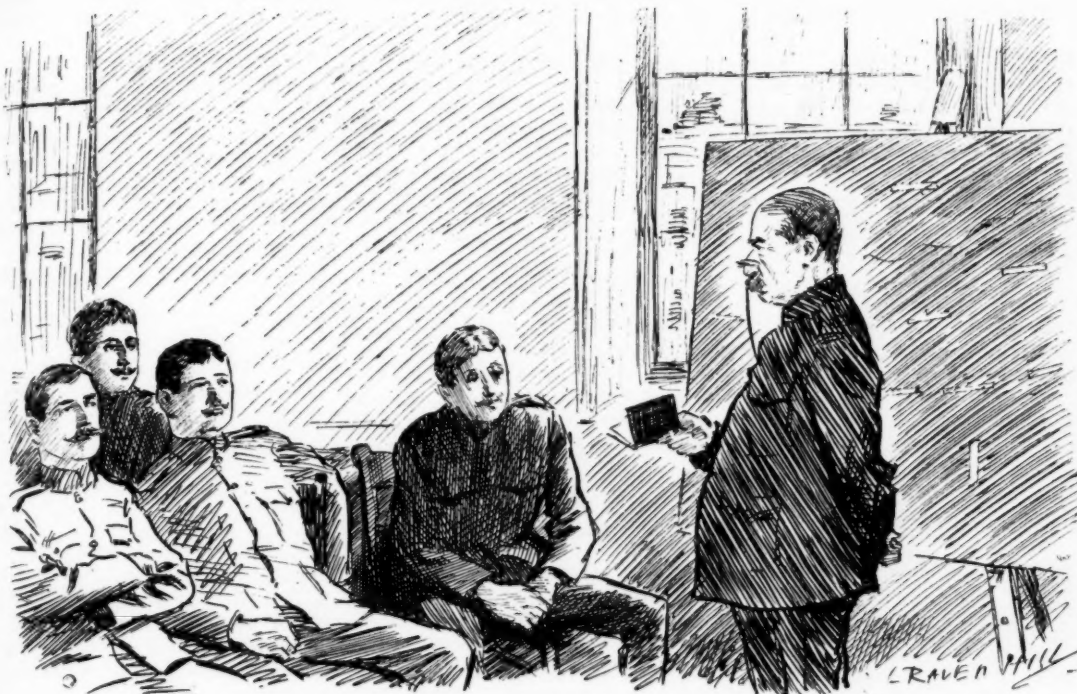
Once I thought something was really going to happen, when the Gräfin said that she was looking forward excitedly to a whole heap of teas. I should have chosen dances myself, but teas are better than nothing, and sometimes you get a stray man to look in; and then it turned out that it was short *forten-roses*. Such dull things to look forward to!

And then, again, I never get really shocked here. Oh, yes, once I was when the Gräfin said that she hoped that a lot of Rubenses wouldn't get into Madame JOSEPH SCHWARZ'S bed by mistake again as they did last year. Of course I guessed that "Rubenses" were only pictures, but it *did* seem rather muddy for Madame SCHWARZ having them actually in her bed, and so many of them too, besides being very valuable, I should think, and easily damaged, especially if she is stout like most German women are. And I wondered if Madame SCHWARZ was a visitor or just the housekeeper; and when I asked if they weren't taken out at once, the Gräfin said that no, it was too late and they had to keep them there all the summer as it wasn't safe to move them. And then I asked wasn't it very uncomfortable for her having to sleep on a crowd of old oils, or were they only very little ones, and was there room for her in the other half of the bed; and it turned out that it wasn't pictures, or a visitor, or a housekeeper at all, but just the names of different dwarf-roses!

Always roses and things! I thought I liked flowers till I came here, though I was never good at their names and used to mix up verbenas with scarlet-runners; but after this I know it will take away my appetite just seeing them on a dinner-table, and when I die, which I shall do pretty soon if things go on like this, I hope they'll have a notice put in the paper, saying, "No flowers, please."

I don't wonder the Graf himself keeps away from his wife. I suppose her parents made him marry her like the poor Marquis at Chasse-Bébé. I really miss him and the Vicomte, and if Lord VALKOP was here now I don't believe I should smack him so hard again, however he behaved, though they were rather forward, all of them, weren't they, Mamma?

Later.—Great news! The Gräfin says vaguely that the Man-



TACTICS.

Instructor. "WELL, GENTLEMEN, I HAVE ENDEAVOURED TO EXPLAIN TO YOU THE THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE MOVEMENTS OF THE VARIOUS PORTIONS OF A COMBINED FORCE; BUT I MUST WARN YOU, THAT, IN PRACTICE, ON AN ORDINARY FIELD-DAY YOU WILL PROBABLY FIND IT RESULT IN HOPELESS CONFUSION; WHILE ON ACTIVE SERVICE IT WILL BE TEN TIMES WORSE!"

of-War is coming before the month is out. So perhaps there will be a dance on board, and anyway we ought to see something of the officers. CÉLESTINE is quite perking up at the thought of bosoms or whatever they call them here. The Gräfin speaks of the Man-of-War, so I suppose there isn't more than one in the German Navy. I do hope there's no mistake this time, and that it won't turn out to be a new bulb, or something of that sort.

Your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

O. S.

(To be continued.)

THE BUREAU OF COMMON-SENSE.

[Judge EMDEN, of Lambeth County Court, is convinced that nothing is more required than a bureau to give common-sense advice to the humbler classes. His Honour had before him a labourer, who earned from 25s. to 30s. a week, and supported a wife and family. He was induced to take a 25-guinea piano on the hire-purchase system, but could not keep up his monthly payments."—*Daily Paper.*]

It is suggested that, if such a Bureau were established, the daily report of proceedings might read something after this fashion:—WILLIAM JENKINSON, bricklayer, applied for advice under the following circumstances. His wife had been kept awake by neuralgia for two nights in succession. Should he call in Sir DOUGLAS POWELL, or would a change of air be likely to relieve her sufferings? In the latter case, he was uncertain whether to take her to the South of France or for a long sea-voyage. Perhaps the authorities would kindly give him the names of some first-class hotels in the Riviera. He was earning regular wages of 18s. a week.

ROBERT JONES, dustman, was anxious to know whether he would be considered extravagant if he indulged his taste for

Art by attending at CHRISTIE'S in his spare time and bidding for Old Masters. He already possessed at his private residence, in Clare Market, a fine specimen of VELASQUEZ and an undisputed TITIAN. There was a little thing by TINTORETTO that he was particularly anxious to secure. He was in receipt of 15s. a week from the Vestry, but a good many of the householders were in the habit of giving him twopence for himself when he cleared their dust-bins.

JIM HOPKINS, railway porter, wanted to be told what was the largest amount, consistent with true economy, that a person in his position might spend annually on opera tickets. He made 16s. a week and tips extra. Also, which was the best place to take a lady to for supper. He had heard that the cooking was good both at the Carlton and the Savoy.

THOMAS SIMPSON was earning 14s. weekly as a 'bus conductor. His working hours being rather long, he had little time to himself, but his great hobby was book collecting. He possessed the first four folios of SHAKESPEARE complete, and most of the quartos. There was, however, room in his library in the Mile End Road for some more volumes. Did the Bureau authorities think him justified in buying a beautiful edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, bound in vellum, or would he be acting more wisely in subscribing for the *Times* issue of the *First Fifty Years of Punch*.

JOSEPH TIMMS, office-boy, was quite aware that you cannot judge cigars by the picture on the box. He was unable to make up his mind whether "La Rosa De Santiago" Celestiales, at 102s. the hundred, were preferable to "H. De Cabanas Y Carbajal" Imperiales at 84s. Of course, if the Bureau advised him to go in for a cheaper cigar, "HENRY CLAYS" at 51s. were not bad. His salary was 7s. 6d. a week, but he expected to have a rise soon.

A DRAMATIC PROLOGUE.

THE UNFORTUNATE MR. EBBSMITH.

THOSE persons who have seen Mrs. PATRICK CAMPBELL's magnificent performance at the Royalty in *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* will have probably gone away with a quite false impression of the gentleman with whom AGNES EBBSMITH spent her eight years of married life. "For the first twelve months," she declares bitterly in the first act, "he treated me like a woman in a harem, for the rest of the time like a beast of burden." This is not quite just to poor EBBSMITH, who was a good sort of fellow in his commonplace way, and it is manifestly unfair that the audience should have no opportunity of hearing his side of the question. An attempt is made to remedy this injustice in the following Prologue, which all fair-minded persons are entreated to read before seeing Mr. PINERO's very clever play.

SCENE—The dining-room of the EBBSMITHS' house in West Kensington. AGNES and her husband are at breakfast. They have been married seven years. She looks much as we see her in the early acts of the play, gaunt, pale, badly dressed. He is a careworn man with hair slightly grey at the temples, an anxious forehead and sad eyes. He is glancing through the *Standard* in the intervals of eating his bacon. She is absorbed in the *Morning Scream*, one of the more violent Socialist-Radical organs of that day. Presently, EBBSMITH looks up.

EBBSMITH. You won't forget, AGNES, that we are expecting people to dinner to-night?

AGNES (putting down her paper with an air of patient endurance). Eh?

EBBSMITH (mildly). I was saying, dear, if you will give me your attention for a moment, that I hoped you would not forget that Sir MYLES JAWKINS and his wife and the SPENCERS and the THORNTONS were dining here to-night.

AGNES (contemptuously). You seem very anxious that I should remember that Lady JAWKINS is honouring us with her company!

EBBSMITH. I only meant that I hoped you had told JANE about dinner. Last time the JAWKINS came you may recollect that you had omitted to order anything for them to eat, and when they arrived there was nothing in the house but some soup, a little cold mutton and a rice pudding.

AGNES. Very well (returns to her paper).

EBBSMITH. Thank you. And, AGNES, if you could manage to be dressed in time to receive them I should be very much obliged.

AGNES. I?

EBBSMITH. Of course. I suppose you will be here to entertain our guests.

AGNES. Your guests, you mean.

EBBSMITH. My dear AGNES, surely my guests are your guests also!

AGNES (breaking out). As long as the present unjust and oppressive marriage laws remain in force—

EBBSMITH (interrupting). I don't think we need go into the question of the alteration of the marriage laws.

AGNES. Ah, yes. You always refuse to listen to my arguments on that subject. You know they are unanswerable.

EBBSMITH (patiently). I only meant that there would hardly be time to argue the matter at breakfast.

AGNES (vehemently). A paltry evasion!

EBBSMITH. Still, I assume that you will be here to receive our guests—my guests if you prefer it—to-night.

AGNES. Do you make a point of always being at home to receive my guests?

EBBSMITH. Those Anarchist people whom you are constantly asking to tea? Certainly not.

AGNES (with triumphant logic). Then, may I ask, why I should be at home to receive the JAWKINS?

EBBSMITH. My dear, you surely realise that the cases are hardly parallel. The only time I was present at one of your Revolutionary tea-parties the guests consisted of a Hyde Park orator who dropped his h's, a cobbler who had turned Socialist by way of increasing his importance in the eyes of the community, three ladies who were either living apart from their husbands or living with the husbands of other ladies, and a Polish refugee who had been convicted, quite justly, of murder. You cannot pretend to compare the JAWKINS with such people.

AGNES. Indeed, I can. (Rhetorically) In a properly organized Society—

EBBSMITH (testily). I really can't stop to re-organize Society now. I am due at my chambers in half-an-hour.

AGNES (sullenly). As you decline to listen to what I have to say, I may as well tell you at once that I shall not be at home to dinner to-night.

EBBSMITH (controlling his temper with an effort). May I ask your reason?

AGNES. Because I have to be at the meeting of the Anti-marriage Association.

EBBSMITH. Can't you send an excuse?

AGNES. Send an excuse! Throw up a meeting called to discuss an important Public question because you have asked a few barristers and their wives to dine! You must be mad.

EBBSMITH. Well, I must put them off, I suppose. What night next week will suit you to meet them? Thursday?

AGNES. On Thursday I am addressing a meeting of the Society for the Encouragement of Divorce.

EBBSMITH. Friday?

AGNES (coldly). Friday, as you know, is the weekly meeting of the Agamists' League.

EBBSMITH. Saturday?

AGNES. On Saturday I am speaking on Free Union for the People at Battersea.

EBBSMITH. Can you suggest an evening?

AGNES (firmly). No. I think the time has come to make a stand against the convention which demands that a wife should preside at her husband's dinner-parties. It is an absurdity. Away with it!

EBBSMITH (alarmed). But, AGNES! Think what you are doing. You don't want to offend these people. SPENCER and THORNTON are useful men to know, and JAWKINS puts a lot of work in my way.

AGNES (with magnificent scorn). How like a man! And so I am to be civil to this JAWKINS person because he "puts a lot of work in your way!"

EBBSMITH (meekly). Well, you know, my dear, I have to make an income somehow.

AGNES. I would sooner starve than resort to such truckling!

EBBSMITH (gloomily). We are likely to do that, sooner or later, in any case.

AGNES. What do you mean?

EBBSMITH (diffidently). Your—ahem!—somewhat subversive tenets, my love, are not precisely calculated to improve my professional prospects.

AGNES. What have I to do with your prospects?

EBBSMITH. The accounts of your meetings which appear in the newspapers are not likely to encourage respectable solicitors to send me briefs.

AGNES (indifferently). Indeed!

EBBSMITH. Here is a report in to-day's *Standard* of a meeting addressed by you last night which would certainly not have that effect. Shall I read it to you?

AGNES. If you wish it.

EBBSMITH (reads). "The meeting which was held in St. Luke's parish last night under the auspices of the Polyandrous Club proved to be of an unusually exciting description. The lecturer was Mrs. JOHN EBBSMITH, wife of the well-known barrister of that name." Really, AGNES, I think my name need not have been dragged into the business.

AGNES. Go on.

EBBSMITH. "As soon as the doors were opened the place of meeting—the Iron Hall, Carter Street—was filled with a compact body of roughs assembled from the neighbouring streets, and there seemed every prospect of disorderly scenes. The appearance of Mrs. EBBSMITH on the platform was greeted with cries of 'Mad AGNES!' " Surely, my dear, you must recognise that my professional reputation is endangered when my wife is reported in the newspapers to be addressing meetings in discreditable parts of London, where her appearance is greeted with shouts of 'Mad AGNES!' "



"PAWS OFF!"

Agnes. Nonsense! Who is likely to read an obscure paragraph like that?

Ebb Smith. Obscure paragraph! My dear AGNES, the *Standard* has a leading article on it. Listen to this:—"Mrs. EBB SMITH'S crusade against the institution of marriage is again attracting unfavourable attention. Last night in St. Luke's she once more attempted to ventilate her preposterous schemes . . . crack-brained crusade . . . bellowing revolutionary nonsense on obscure platforms . . . This absurd visionary, whom her audiences not inappropriately nickname 'Mad AGNES' . . . Ultimately the meeting had to be broken up by the police . . . We cannot understand how a man in Mr. EBB SMITH'S position can allow himself to be made ridiculous." (*Almost weeping*) I do think they might leave my name out of it. In a leading article too!

Agnes. Is there any more of the stuff?

Ebb Smith. Another half column. Do, my dear, to oblige me, find some less ostentatious method of making known your views on the subject of marriage.

Agnes (*anticipating a remark subsequently made by the Duke of ST. OLPHERTS*). Unostentatious immodesty is not part of my programme.

Ebb Smith (*humbly*). Could you not, for my sake, consent to take a less prominent part in the movement?

Agnes (*enthusiastically*). But I want to be among the Leaders—the Leaders! That will be my hour.

Ebb Smith (*puzzled*). Your hour? I don't think I quite understand you.

Agnes. There's only one hour in a woman's life—when she's defying her husband, wrecking his happiness and blasting his prospects. That is her hour! Let her make the most of every second of it!

Ebb Smith (*wearily*). Well, my dear, when it's over, you'll have the satisfaction of counting the departing footsteps of a ruined man.

Agnes. Departing?

Ebb Smith. Certainly. You and your crusade between them will have killed me. But I must go now. I ought to be at my chambers in ten minutes, and I must go round and make my excuses to JAWKINS some time this morning. Tell JANE not to bother about dinner to-night. I shall dine at the Club.

(Curtain.) ST. J. H.

VENEZIA LA BELLA.

[According to a correspondent of the *Times*, it is proposed to erect bridges connecting Venice with the mainland.]

ONE afternoon in the autumn of 1930, when the express from Milan arrived at Venice an Englishman stepped out, handed his luggage ticket to a porter, and said, "*Hotel Tiziano*."

"*Adesso Hotel Moderno, signore*," remarked the porter.

"They've changed the name, I suppose. All right. *Hotel Moderno, gondola*."

"*Che cosa, signore?*" asked the porter, apparently confused, "*gon—, gondo—, non capisco. Hotel Moderno, non è vero?*" And he led the way to the outside, where the Englishman perceived a wide, asphalted street. "*Ecco là, signore, la stazione sotterranea del Tubo dei Quattro Soldi; ecco qui la tramvia elettrica, e l'omnibus dell' hotel*."

"*Gondola*," repeated the Englishman. The porter stared at him again. Then he shook his head and answered, "*Non capisco, signore, non parlo inglese*." So the Englishman entered the motor omnibus, started at once, for there were no other travellers, and in a few minutes arrived at the hotel, designed by an American architect and fifteen stories in height. The gorgeous marble and alabaster entrance-hall was entirely deserted.

Having engaged a room, the Englishman asked for a guide. The hall porter, who spoke ten languages fluently and simultaneously, murmured some words into a telephone, and almost immediately a dapper little man presented himself with an obsequious bow.

"I want to go round the principal buildings," said the Englishman. "You speak English, of course."

"Secure, Sir," answered the guide, with another bow; "alls the ciceronians speaks her fine language, but her speak I as one English. Lets us go to visit the Grand Central Station of the Tube."

"Oh, no," said the Englishman, "not that sort of thing! I'm not an engineer. I should like to see the Doge's Palace."

"Lo, Sir! The Palace is now the *Stazione Centrale Elettrica*."

"Then it's no good going to see that. I will go to St. Marks."

"San Marco is shutted, Sir. The *vibrazione* of the electrical mechanism has done fall the mosaics. The to visit is become too periculous."

"Oh, indeed! Well, we can go up the Grand Canal."

"The Canal Grande, Sir, is now the *Via Marconi*. Is all changed, and covered, as all the olds canals of Venezia, with arches of steel and a street of asphalt. Is fine, fine, è bella, bella, una via maravigliosa!"

"You don't mean to say there isn't a canal left? Where are the gondolas then?"

"Ah, una gondola! The sir is archeologo. Ebbene! We shall go to the Museo. There she shall see one gondola, much curious, and old, ah, so old!"

"Not a canal, not a gondola—except in the museum! What is there to see?"

"There is much, Sir. There is the Tube of the Four Halfpennies, *tutto all' inglese*, as at London. He is on the arches of steel below the news streets. There is the bridge from the city to

Murano, one span of steel all covered of stone much thin, as the *Ponte della Torre*, the Bridge of the Tower, at London. Is marvellous, the our bridge! Is one bridge, and not of less not appear to be one bridge, but one castle of the middle age in the middle air. È bellissimo, e anche tutto all' inglese. And then—"

"Stop," cried the Englishman. "Does anybody ever come to your city now? Any artists, for instance?"

"Ah, no, Sir! Pittori, scultori, perché? But there are voyagers some time. The month past all the Society of the Engineers of Japan are comed, and the hotels were fulls, and all those sirs were much contenteds and sayed the city was marvellous. She shall go now, Sir, to visit the bridge?"

"No," said the Englishman, emphatically, "not I! Let me pay my bill here and your fee, whatever it is, and take me back to the railway station as fast as you can. There are plenty of bridges in London. I am going back there."

H. D. B.

"IN OTHER DAYS LET OTHER LIPS."

NOT mine to tell in splendid verse
My Lady's beauty, nor to greet her
With joyous music, nor rehearse
Her virtue in melodious metre.

NOT mine to liken her dear eyes
To something shy and unexpected
In metaphor that would surprise
The poets who are most respected.

NOT mine to weave her fancy prose
With all a laureate's graceful notion,
Nor glad her sight with rows on rows
Of printed, edited emotion.

NOT mine—an undiscovered KEATS,
My genius has escaped detection,
And everything I proffer meets
With editorial rejection.

DARBY JONES ON THE GRAND NATIONAL.

HONOURED SIR,—Reading in the *Daily Telegraph* that spring had arrived (though, sooth to say, I would humbly suggest that the *Discovery* need not seek the South Pole if the Promoters of the Expedition desire Antarctic sensations), I plucked up courage to run through the candidates about to compete for the Timber and Ditch Derby. My prognostications are brief but, I trust, to the point—point-to-point, in fact.

There are many, who back the *Go to meet Hack*,
But I prefer *Glory of night-debt*;
Bit of Gossip may win, but I like for the spin
The *Lotion of Slough* if well set.

Trusting, honoured Sir, that You and Yours will be well to the fore as usual,
I am, as heretofore,

Your devoted Henchman,
DARBY JONES.



THE LAST MEET OF THE SEASON.

"PALMISTRY."

"PALMAM QUI MERUIT FERAT," I.E., "LET THOSE WHO DESERVE A TIP GET IT."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

Princes and Poisoners (DUCKWORTH) is the attractive title given to a translation of Monsieur FUNCK-BRENTANO's studies of the Court of LOUIS XIV. These studies are, perhaps, a little monotonously confined to the occupation of secret murder. As the industrious author is able to give chapter and verse from official documents for his weird stories we must accept them as matters of fact. They reveal a state of things in the daily life of Paris during the reign of the Grand Monarque, contemplation of which lends a new reading to the cherished phrase about the good old times. If a woman in any rank of life, from a washer-woman to a marchioness, grew a-weary of her husband, she just poisoned him and borrowed another, who, in all probability, eventually shared the same fate. It is noteworthy that the chief movers in this domestic drama, from the sorceress LA VOISIN to the great practitioner the Countess de BRINVILLIERS, were women. The story of the latter has often been told, never in fuller or more authentic detail than in this narrative. For perfectly harmless people like my Baronite it has a horrible fascination. Beer-drinkers in the neighbourhood of Manchester will be interested to learn that the poison habitually used by Madame de BRINVILLIERS was arsenic. The French work is skilfully translated by Mr. GEORGE MAIDMENT.

Messrs. GAY and BIRD have added *Leaves from Pepys' Diary* to their charming *Bibelots*. The selection is admirably made by the Editor, Mr. POTTER BRISCOE, who contributes an introduction which in brief space tells a good deal about the peerless Diarist and his times. In less degree than SHAKESPEARE, PEPYS was not for an age but for all time. Turning over the

Leaves, my Baronite comes upon a graphic account of the Coronation, in Westminster Abbey, of CHARLES II. In anticipation of the crowning of King EDWARD VII. that will grace next year, this narrative has peculiar interest.

Excellent number is that of the *Pall Mall* for April, containing most interesting article on J. F. MILLET, the inspired artist of "*The Angelus*," and a charming short story by Mr. PICKERING, entitled *Monsignor*, in which the principal character is strongly reminiscent of the Abbé LISZT. The illustrations, however, in no way recall the personal appearance of that eminent musician and composer who, in the later years of his life, became an ecclesiastic in "minor" orders, for he never attained to the "major" in his adopted profession.

THE BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

NEWS FROM THE LEVANTINES.

SIR,—Levantine morals and manners have been in past times a bye-word among nations, though, latterly, the verb "to levant" has been declined, or, rather, has not been much declined, as shady lots are not spoken of nowadays as "levanting." Yet this inclosed extract from the *Journal de Salonique* is rather startling:—

"L'assemblée générale annuelle qui devait avoir lieu samedi dernier au Tennis and Croquet Club, a été remise à jeudi prochain, le nombre d'assistants n'ayant pas atteint le décorum."

Does it not prove that even now these gay islanders are considerably ahead of even what we Westerners imagined them to be? Nice name that, "The Croquet Club." Is Madame MAL-APROPOS also among the Levantines? It looks like it.—Yours,

A. REKLA IOPENA.

'VARSITY VERSES.

OXFORD ODES.

XI.

TIME was when the High to the feminine eye
Was a shrine of mysterious rites,
Where studious youth sat worshipping Truth
Through long and laborious nights;
And woman still trod each garden and quad.
With a fearful delight as she ran,
While a halo of gold she was apt to behold
Round the cap of the 'Varsity man.

At the letters B.A. she was filled with dismay,
Such learning they seemed to imply—
Which fact followed from the principle *omne ignotum pro terribili*.
A Master of Arts was a master of hearts,
Who worshipping crowds never lacked,
For the graduate dunce was a magnate at once
And as such he was bound to attract.

But the lustre that fell, like a magical spell,
O'er our halls we can only deplore,
And the glory once shed round the graduate's head
Now shines on our faces no more.
For the girls swarming by, down the Corn and the High,
Have invaded each college and shrine,
With the tragic result they've abandoned our cult,
And think us no longer divine.

To boast a B.A. is now a poor way
To give weight to our masculine words,
For these maidens of course know precisely the force
Of our Firsts and our Seconds and Thirds.
A don in their eyes is not bound to be wise,
Nor a graduate always a god:
'Neath the pelt leonine a poor ass they divine—
Our glory is gone. Ichabod!

THE CARTOONS OF SIR JACKIDES THE INIMITABLE.

(Selected from Mr. Punch's Pages and published at the
"Punch" Office.)

OLD friends, indeed, and to not a few of us somewhere in the
sere and yellow, old familiar faces too! What memories does
not this carefully compiled collection of Sir JOHN's famous
cartoons, from 1851 to 1901, awaken! The Russian Bear and
the Bees! the British Lion's Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger!
What pages of history are here summed up in such a
manner that the busiest or the most careless among the
younger ones may learn them in a few moments, and the
least impressionable will carry away with them the lasting
remembrance of the powerful pictures that at the time
recorded these events and emphasized their moral. What real
lions! what fierce tigers! what wonderful bears, dancing,
piping, or hugging.

There is one very striking scene representing Lord RANDOLPH
CHURCHILL when, in 1886, as the Grand Young Man he took the
House by storm. Behind him stands the watchful shade of
DISRAELI, saying, "Dear me! Quite reminds me of old times!"
And now, in this year of grace, 1901, has not Mr. Punch's
Parliamentary artist quite recently reminded the public of this
very cartoon by showing, in a small sketch, WINSTON CHURCHILL
in his father's attitude, repeating his father's *tour de force*,
while behind him is the shade of Lord RANDOLPH, in the attitude
of DISRAELI's ghost, repeating these identical words? Of course,
the allusion to Sir JOHN's "DISRAELI picture" was taken at once
and thoroughly appreciated.

What humour in "The Panic among the Pigs," when a Papal

Rescript condemned "The Plan of Campaign" and scattered
the Irish Nationalists! What pathos in that wonderful
"Dropping the Pilot," of which the original is in Lord
ROSEBERRY's possession. What genuine fun and humour in the
two old maids, H-RC-RT and M-RL-Y, under the mistletoe,
December, 1898!

One of Sir JOHN's most remarkable triumphs—he is always
immense when humanizing animals—is in his conception of the
Chinese Dragon (1900) about to receive its death-blow from the
spear of civilisation. It is only when calling to mind the comic
pantomimic effects of the droll fairy legends, with which the
figure of the Dragon has always been pictorially associated, that
the thoughtful critic will realise the great difficulty that had to
be encountered by any artist determined to deal seriously with
a dragon, and to give us such a monster as would cause
rather a thrill of terror than raise even the slightest smile.
WAGNER and his property men signally failed with their dragon
on the operatic stage: *c'était pour rire*. But TENNIEL's Dragon
is fearfully and wonderfully made. Sir JOHN has compelled the
grotesque to become very real and living. Yes, it is Sir JOHN
himself who is the knight that has conquered the Dragon.

In his cartoon of "Gladiators preparing for the Arena"—a
veritable triumph of wit and humour displayed in perfect artis-
tic design and consummate draughtsmanship, unsurpassed, I may
venture to affirm, by any cartoon of a similar character that
Sir JOHN has ever done—the names of the political celebrities
therein portrayed are clearly set forth below, so that future
generations, to whom the living presentments of "Lord JOHN,"
ROEBUCK, HORSMAN, T. HUGHES, MILL, LOWE, GLADSTONE, Lord
DERBY, B. DISRAELI and JOHN BRIGHT would be unfamiliar or
absolutely unknown, are thus enabled to identify each celebrity.
It would have added considerably to the historic value of this
admirable collection had this plan been adopted throughout.
A mere detail. *Vivat Sir Jackides!*

FIXED FOR THE FIRST.

RUSSIA and Japan will inaugurate a joint international exhi-
bition, to which England, Germany, America and China will
forward contributions.

An actor-manager will produce a play full of good parts, but
with his own name excluded from the programme.

The London County Council will elect Aldermen exclusively
Moderate in their politics.

None of the London streets will be "up" for a fortnight,
and the traffic in the busiest thoroughfares will proceed with-
out interruption.

The most magnificent service of river steamboats will com-
mence running on the Thames at fares within reach of the
poorest pockets, and with luxurious appointments satisfying
the most exacting.

All the principal Paris papers will devote leaders to a de-
claration of their love, admiration, and sincere well-wishes for
Great Britain and her dependencies.

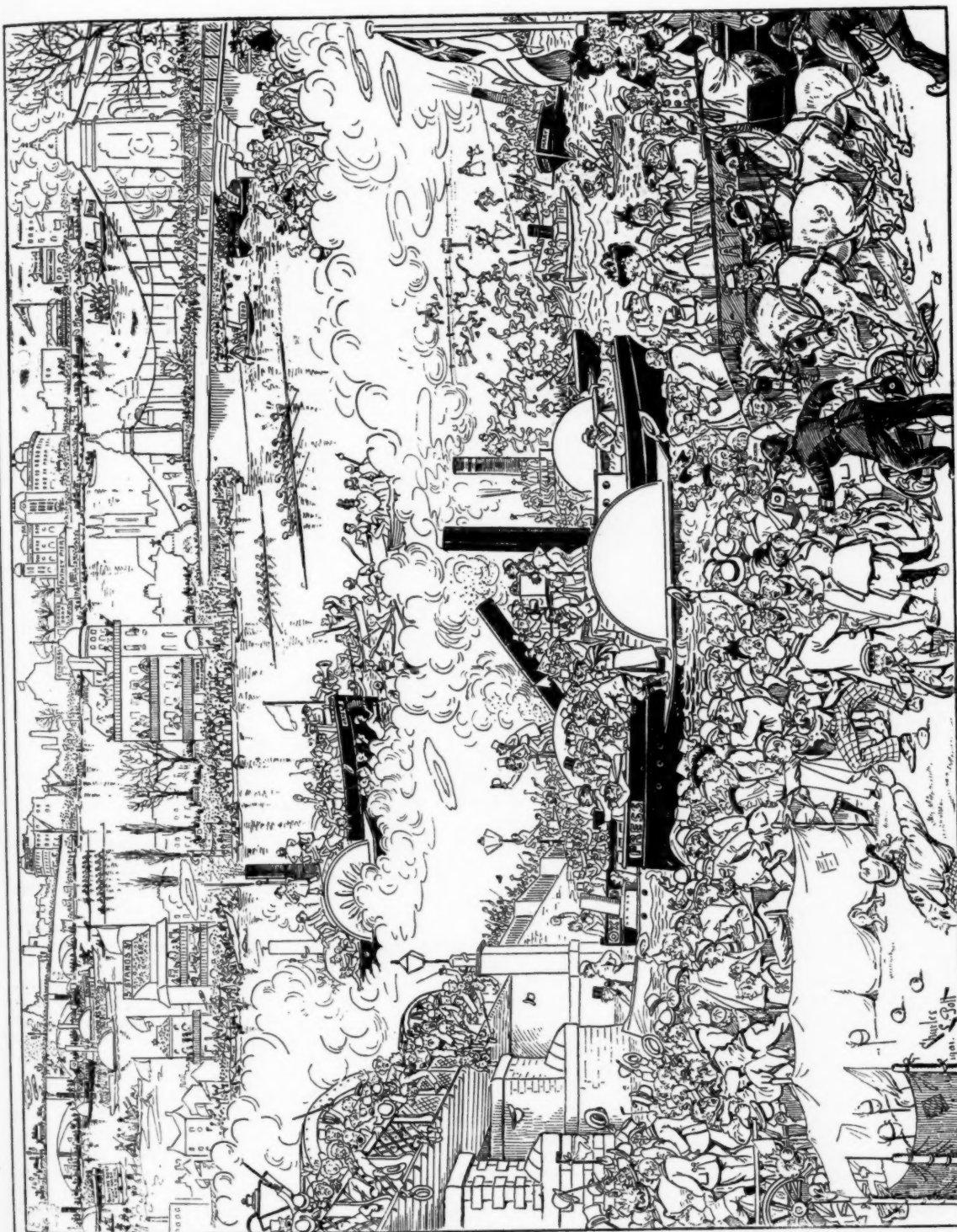
The dates of the coming Court functions will be foretold
accurately in several journals on the highest authority.

The War Office will be accepted as a model of organization
by the Military Intelligence departments in every civilized
state throughout the universe.

Every would-be contributor to the periodical press will
receive back with every appearance of genuine satisfaction
the article that has been rejected.

Lastly, all the above events will occur on Monday next, the
first—of April! and before mid-day!

"HORATIO, I KNEW HIM WELL."—By the death of M. Got the
Drama has lost a great actor. Latterly, he was nearly as popu-
lar in London among actors and theatre-goers as he had long
been in Paris. He was a "fellow of infinite jest." Got Gone!



THE UNIVERSITY BOAT-RACE, 1901. (A VIEW IN PROSPECTIVE BY OUR ANTICIPATORY ARTIST.)



Lady (to invalid). "I HOPE WE SHALL SEE A LITTLE MORE OF ONE ANOTHER AS THE WEATHER GROWS WARMER."

A PESSIMIST'S SPRING SONG.

THOUGH with gentleness
All the bards invest you,
Frankly I confess,
Spring, that I detest you.

Your dim sunshine lures
From snug bed some flower,
At that nip of yours
Soon to shrink and cower.

"Spoofed" by you, dank birds
In their chill nests cuddle;
Under trees in herds
Shivering cattle huddle.

Homeward when I fare,
Your sharp tooth escaping.
Lo! I find you there,
Sweeping, scrubbing, scraping.

Me with pails of slush
Sloppy workmen frighten,

Who with swishing brush
Wash, and stop, and whiten.

On my shelves maids lay
Doctor WATTS by SHELLEY,
And in disarray
SHAKESPEARE next C—I.

Ah! your claims at last,
Spring you must abate now,
For your day is past
You are out of date now.

Lambs (New Zealand ones)
Long we've had without you,
Primroses by tons
Christmas yields, to flout you.

Yes! though poets sing
Your mere praise unmeaning,
I dislike you, Spring,
But I loathe your "cleaning."

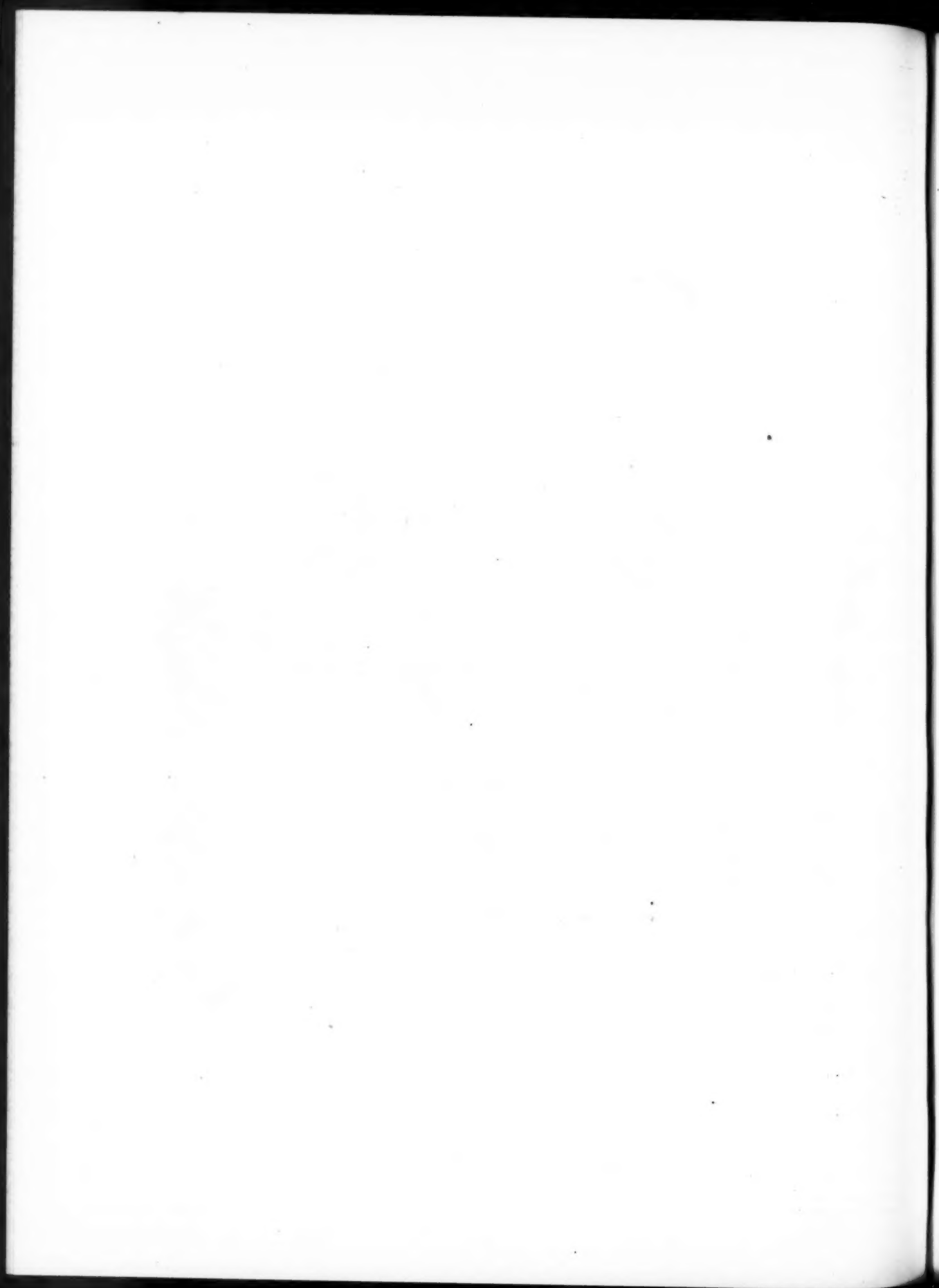
THE CENSUS.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—It is announced that the Registrar-General has issued orders including "elaborate precautions to ensure that, as far as possible, not a single house or a single individual shall be overlooked." I protest, Sir, against the overlooking. I am already overlooked by countless tax-gatherers, why, then, should the Registrar-General put his detectives on my track? Of what interest can it be to him to know my age, or my social position, or the number of the house in which I reside? If the Registrar-General would put on a staff of officials to note the late arrivals of the trains at Metropolitan stations, he would confer a possible blessing on travelling humanity. As it is, he is driving sensible beings to foreign dog-kennels and Continental rabbit-hutches.

Yours, about to cross the Channel,
(Address withheld.) MATILDA MEAGRIM.



A VAIN APPEAL.



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, March 18.—Somebody, I forget who, once "poured contempt and scorn" on somebody else whose name at the moment I forget. DON JOSÉ nicely discriminates. To-night he poured scorn on Mr. LOUGH; heaped contempt on SYDNEY BUXTON. All about Ashanti. A new quarter of the African continent for M.P.'s to take their pleasure in. Identical in one respect with South Africa. In West Africa as in the South, a baleful influence predominates. The Ashantis, as DON JOSÉ pictured them, sarcastically drawing on the fancy of Mr. LOUGH, were enjoying condition of Elysian happiness; the day too short for natives engaged in peaceful pursuits.

fellow countrymen are cruel, treacherous, thieves and murderers; all at expense of blameless natives.

DON JOSÉ almost sorry for Mr. LOUGH. With SYDNEY BUXTON the case different. He had been at the Colonial Office; must know something of the real state of things in Ashanti, of the difficulties and dangers with which the Colonial Office had to wrestle. These, in augmented measure, were inherited by the present Colonial Minister from his predecessors. Here followed withering denunciation of a Government which, whilst the scramble for Africa went on, did nothing, the result being that British Colonies were encroached upon, their value destroyed by the advance of other nations.

Drawing towards midnight when DON JOSÉ rose. A weary sitting; wrangling

Tuesday night.—"Tuppence more and up goes the donkey!" Thus REDMOND *ainé*, in correspondence with convenient persons in the United States and in speeches at St. Patrick Day's banquets. Of course doesn't use the classic phrase. What he says, *ore rotondo*, is that he and his more or less merry men, facing tyrannical Government with majority of 150, have in course of four short weeks reduced House of Commons to absurdity, overwhelmed Government with difficulty and embarrassment. Tuppence more in the hat, and patriotic Irishmen shall see what they shall see.

Speech and letters characteristically bombastic; substratum of truth underlies assertion. House to-night, as it was last night, in pitiable condition regarded from business point of view; progress



SOME "FETISHES" NOT WORSHIPPED BY KING JO-JO OF ASHANTI (AND ELSEWHERE).

On this pleasing picture falls the baneful shadow of the COLONIAL SECRETARY. All is changed; war succeeds peace; discord follows harmony; the sword of the executioner is looted, and eke the Golden Stool is withdrawn from beneath the sacred person of the KING.

"These things follow," said DON JOSÉ, looking round with penitential glance, "on the advent of the Bogey Man from the Colonial Office."

This pretty overture prelude to something resembling an Ashanti foray. Distinction between his two assailants cleverly, effectively marked. For the ignorance of Mr. LOUGH he had no feeling but one of infinite pity. Member for Islington knew nothing about Ashanti, or of the relations of the Colonial Office with it. Suffering from flux of talk, he must needs pour it forth whenever opportunity presented itself; the vote for Ashanti coming up for discussion, it served him as well as any other topic offering means of relief; also he had cherished opportunity of showing that on the West Coast of Africa, as in its Southern parts, his

about procedure up to eight o'clock, when business was commenced with a statement extending through the dinner hour explanatory of Naval Estimates; then Mr. LOUGH; next SYDNEY BUXTON, trying to walk on both sides of the road at the same time; then DON JOSÉ, in ominously smiling mood to begin with. Hasn't enjoyed himself so much for a long time; delight of defence of policy in South Africa palled by repetition; Ashanti new ground; Opposition been nibbling at it for some time; questions suggesting existence of state of things Mr. LOUGH's fancy feigned have appeared on Paper. This the first full opportunity presented.

DON JOSÉ seized it by the hair, as they say in France. Metaphorically, as far as circumstances permit, he also took by the hair the Member for Islington and the Member for Tower Hamlets, banging their heads together by way of cadence to his fiery speech, much as in other climes the dancer beats time with cymbals held in either hand.

Business done.—Naval Estimates introduced.

with Votes slow and spasmodic. When one is submitted, reduction moved; long speech made; Minister in charge replies. If, as chances just now, the Minister be DON JOSÉ, Members on other side rise up and call him wicked. PRINCE ARTHUR after given interval glides in, moves the closure; two divisions, between them occupying half an-hour, are taken. Another Vote submitted; performance repeated.

To-night new Member varied procedure by denouncing eminent City firm as a common gang of thieves and swindlers.

"Let me at them," he exclaimed. "Don't hold me back! Nothing I desire more than that they should bring against me charge of libel. But they won't. Police! Thieves! Swindlers!"

DON JOSÉ obligingly pointed out that new Member could readily obtain his heart's desire. Let him place in writing what he has just said, publish it out of doors, and he would swiftly find himself defendant in action for criminal libel. New Member glared at Colonial Secretary. "The right hon. gentleman," he said, "makes black white and white black."

Why," he cried, going off on a fresh tack, "he once slandered the soldiers of the Empire, the attack being based on anonymous correspondence."

What is to be done with new Member of this kind? J. W. LOWTHER regarded him curiously from the chair; called him to order several times; with difficulty induced to resume his seat whilst Chairman on his feet. Got up again; broke out in fresh place.

"I have," he said, slowly waving a pamphlet, "a document in my hand that would send these directors, if they were in this country, into penal servitude for many years."

That, as Mr. KIPLING occasionally observes, was another story. If allowed to go on unchecked, the new Member evidently the kind of man who would speak disrespectfully of the Equator. With difficulty eluded and another attempt made to get to business.

Business done.—Very little.

Thursday night.—Great day for WILLIAM ALLAN, marine engine builder, poet, and ex-blockade runner. Ever since he came to Westminster has taken up his parable against the Belleville boiler. Boiler now bust; millions having been spent on it by successive administrations, committee of experts declare money wasted. Boiler not to be used any more in British Navy. But it has been used; all big battleships built in recent years have the Belleville boiler. What's to be done about them? is anxiously asked.

"Why, then," answers DOGBERRY (who sat on the Commission), "take no note of him, but let him go, and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God you are rid of great peril."

WILLIAM ALLAN, not satisfied with this shiftless proceeding, ruffles his hair, tangles his beard, draws himself up an inch or two above his superfluous six feet, and hails the Treasury Bench as if it were moored on the other side of the Thames. They must root out these boilers from every ship, beginning with the Royal Yacht.

"Come down like a man," he thundered at ARNOLD FORSTER, pale and trembling on the deserted Bench. "Frankly admit that the Department have made a colossal and costly mistake. Don't allow your *amour propre* to stand in the way."

"*Armour propre*," he called it, suggesting a new type of water-tube boiler.

Business done.—Talked away on divers subjects till midnight, when, settling down to work, took a few Votes and several divisions in report of Supply.

Friday night.—In Lords the other night F.-M. WOLSELEY lifted veil from inner sanctum of War Office, and disclosed SECRETARY OF STATE and Commander-in-Chief fighting each other instead of the Boer. RAGLAN interposed with testimony that so far from the two noble

Lords avoiding each other's society, they were in the habit of seeking it with a persistence embarrassing to the Under Secretary. His room lying between those of the two chiefs, he was constantly interrupted by them flying through in search of each other's counsel.

SARK tells me that whilst this story is true it is not complete. When the SECRETARY OF STATE rushed across to call upon his esteemed friend and colleague, he found the Commander-in-Chief had just rushed out to call on him; and *Vice Versa*, as Mr. ANSTEY says. Thus, like parallel lines, they never met.

LANSDOWNE, since gone to Foreign Office, seems to be pursued by similar malign fate when he desires to observe ordinary condition of co-operation with his



"GRIEVANCES."

Mither O'Dowd. (A sketch in the House.)

colleague. Much angry talk about yesterday's performance in the Lords. FOREIGN SECRETARY, in pursuance of friendly arrangement with EARL SPENCER, made full communication about crisis at Tientsin. An hour later FIRST LORD OF TREASURY invited to make statement on subject to anxious Commons.

"Story! God bless you," cried PRINCE ARTHUR, in his astonishment looking curiously like a needy knife-grinder, "I have none to tell."

Members persisted. FOREIGN SECRETARY had been unreservedly communicative in other House, why should the Commons be kept in the dark on question of momentous importance?

"What communication?" PRINCE ARTHUR asked, in evident bewilderment. "I have heard nothing about it."

"Nor I," said Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

There matter left. House had time to ponder on strange ways of a Government that conducts its business in this fashion.

To-night C.-B. moves adjournment and Ministers get a brisk wiggling.

Business done.—At last in Committee on Navy Estimates.

A FLEET IN SEEMING.

(Showing the folly of wasting money on projectiles.)

THE gentlemen were elderly,
The gentlemen were wise,
And yet they stared in wonder at
The sights that met their eyes.
The Board of Admiralty they
Had planned a little trip
To ascertain the value of
A modern battle ship.

The ship lay snugly in the dock,
And so with one accord
The elderly wise gentlemen
Came presently on board.
They gazed in rapture at her bulk,
Her armour-plated sides,
Admitting that shipbuilding had
Made certainly great strides.

They peered into her turrets grim,
Her horrid guns they eyed,
And each the foremost Naval Power
In playful jest defied.
They clambered up, they tumbled
down,
They tramped from bow to stern,
The finest new equipment they
Beheld at every turn.

They worked a gun, the search-light
proved,
The signalling inspected,
And joyed to think what credit it
Upon themselves reflected.
But as they were about to leave
The warship for the shore,
They recollected they had missed
The ammunition store.

They called the officer in charge,
Their wish to him expressed,
And asked, in bygone phrase, to see
The ammunition chest.
The officer by shoulder-shrug
Its absence indicated,
And said, "Our ammunition, Sirs,
Is not yet fabricated."

The elderly wise gentlemen
Looked each the other at
In ill-concealed astonishment,
And murmured, "Fancy that!"
"But if," said one, "in action you
Were sent against the foe,
It surely would be safer to—
Load up a gun or so?"

The officer replied: "If we
Were into action sent, Sirs,
All moneys on projectiles would
Be very idly spent, Sirs,
For Naval experts all agree
We should not need a shot there,
For all our boilers would explode
Long, long before we got there.



SHEREDITY.

Lady. "YOU DON'T MEAN TO TELL ME THAT THIS LITTLE GIRL IS FIT TO WAIT AT TABLE!"

Mother (proudly). "WELL 'M, SHE OUGHT TO BE, SEEIN' AS 'OW 'ER FATHER 'AS BEEN A PLATE LAYER FOR FIVE AND TWENTY YEAR!"

THE EVOLUTION OF A MUSICAL COMEDY.

CANTO THE SIXTH.

HENCEFORTH, until the time of production, rehearsals will be the order of the day—and night. It is, perhaps, difficult to make the reader realize the quantity of hard work that will be gone through in these final weeks. The burden of this falls most heavily on that important individual, the stage-manager, unless one of the authors is a person of sufficient experience to take the production of the piece into his own hands.

Nor must we forget the assistant stage-manager, who in no small degree shares the responsibility of his superior officer.

Let us then just take a glance at the general surroundings amid which these operations are conducted.

The stage is wrapt in mystic gloom, save where a "T" of gas or electric light sheds its rays. Down by the footlights, which are not lit, is a diminutive table and a few chairs. Round these are grouped the stage-manager, authors, composers, etc. When the final rehearsals are on, however, as a rule, a temporary platform is erected over the centre of the orchestra for these individuals, so as to give more space on the stage.

The members of the chorus, when their services are not wanted, may be discerned sitting or wandering round the outskirts of the stage, while the principals go through their scenes in the centre.

So line by line the piece is plodded through,
With many a halt for "business" here and there;
And, oh! the feelings of the authors, who
Must frequently be driven to despair,
At seeing that on which they set great store
Ruthlessly "cut," to vanish evermore.

The arranger
of dances.

Anon the services will be required
Of him who guides the light fantastic toes;
With knowledge by Terpsichore inspired,
He will arrange fall many a graceful pose.
And every kind of dance is in his line,
The double shuffle or the serpentine.

Thus hour by hour they work, and day by day,
No trifling point attention will escape;
Till gradually chaos will give way
To something that approaches form and shape.
And the stage-manager, deserving chap,
Has got another feather in his cap.

This is the sort of thing that goes on. We will presume that the Light Comedian and the Principal Girl are going through a scene in the centre of the stage.

Light Comedian (addressing Principal Girl). But do you mean to say, my dear VIOLET, that your father is very strict?

Principal Girl. Oh, he's simply dreadful!

Stage Manager (suddenly shouting to some of the chorus, who are conversing in audible whispers). Silence, if you please, ladies!

Light Comedian. Dear me, I shouldn't have thought it from his photos!

Principal Girl. I know, he *does* look benevolent; but it's all his whiskers.

Stage Manager (making notes on the "script"). Don't forget to cross at "whiskers," Miss BLANK.

Light Comedian. So he's a bit of a bear, eh? Well, perhaps that comes of being connected with the Stock Exchange.

One of the Authors (nervously interrupting). I don't think you put quite enough emphasis on the word "bear." There's meant to be a little point in that. Sort of play on words!

Light Comedian. I see!

[Repeats the line as required.]

Principal Girl. Oh, JACK, I don't understand anything about the Stock Exchange.

[The Light Comedian delivers a rather lengthy but epigrammatic speech, comparing the Stock Exchange to a barometer.]

Stage Manager. Yes, I think we'll cut that speech, if you don't mind. (Murmur of mild expostulation from one of the authors.) Really, my dear chap, it's much too clever for the audience here. We must have it out?

[The Author retires crushed. The Light Comedian and Principal Girl continue their scene, which is at last brought to a satisfactory conclusion.]

Stage Manager. Shan't want you any more to-day, Miss BLANK. (Shouting) Now then, ladies, please take your places for the Concerted Number!

Fair Damsel (approaching him). Please, Mr. JONES, may I have that line to speak after the opening chorus?

Stage Manager. Oh, don't worry, my dear girl; I can't settle that just now.

Some more Fair Damsels. Where are we to go for our second-act dresses, Mr. JONES?

Stage Manager. RUSSELL & TEWSON'S, any time to-morrow. Now then, ladies, if you please!

Low Comedian (suddenly making his appearance from the surrounding gloom, where he has been pacing up and down, wrapt in thought). One moment, Mr. JONES. I've just been thinking out a bit of business in my scene with Miss ASTERISK. You know where I say "No, it is in vain; you cannot move me. I am Irish!" Well, I want half-a-dozen of the chorus men, dressed as policemen, to come on and carry me off.

Stage Manager (dubiously). Seems a lot of trouble just for that one exit.

Low Comedian. Well, it will get me a big laugh.

Stage Manager. I'll see about it. Now then, ladies, if you please.

[The rehearsal is continued.]

Final Touches. And when at last the *première* draws nigh,
There's still more work, as you may understand;
The musical director, by-the-bye,
Will have to take the orchestra in hand.
Costumiers are "fitting on" with care,
And carpenters are busy ev'rywhere.

The Dress
Rehearsals.

Then come the dress rehearsals, two or more,
Which friendly critics watch with interest;
Turning the merits of each artiste o'er,
Discussing, too, which numbers are the best,
And will the piece give pleasure or offence
To the exacting first-night audience.

But if, at the eleventh hour, the play
Seems to be in an uncompleted state,
The new production very likely may
Be yet postponed until another date;
So as to run no risks of condemnation
Merely through insufficient preparation.

Still, even if the first-night verdict be
A most decidedly unpleasant one,
It does not follow, as a certainty,
The piece is not to have a longish run.
For it may be improved, and, more or less,
Worked up into a regular success.

We are now, gentle reader, approaching the last scene of all in this strange, eventful history. All true lovers of the drama are aware of the atmosphere of excitement and expectation which prevails at such a time. There is nothing else quite like it. Indeed, a visit to the theatre on a first-night is as different from a visit on any ordinary occasion as champagne is from barley-water.

(To be concluded.)

P. G.

BUSINESS EXPERIENCES OF THE HON. THOMAS CASH.

BY E. T. H.

I DETERMINED that MACDONALD should be conscious of a master eye upon him, and for the ensuing month I can truthfully say that there were few days of which I did not pass some part in the brewery or its immediate vicinity; but it was a mistake.

I have never pretended that I had any special acquaintance with the merely technical side of brewing. It is not yet included in the curriculum of the older Universities, whatever Birmingham may do, and as I have already indicated that I had dropped mathematics at about the point where we learn x to be an unknown quantity, xxx appeared trebly mysterious. But it was no part of my plan to admit this to

me at once. I think he must have suspected some evasion, for on Thursday he sent up a note by the office-boy to ask me to send him word "what percentage of protenoids I considered normal." This was an awkward fix, and I did not quite see my way. I had not the least notion what protenoids might be. My dictionary, which I hastily consulted under cover of my blotter, did not mention the ridiculous things, but judging from the uncouthness of the name they must be something undesirable, and everything undesirable is always present in large quantities. However, even with this to guide me I dare not risk a number, so I ultimately wrote, "It is a matter much disputed, but I think PASTEUR's estimate was correct"—as indeed I have no doubt it was, if he ever made one on the subject. The office-boy took the note, and as he opened the door into the brewery, I opened the one into the street.



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MACDONALD, and I was unfortunately able on one occasion to set him right on a point of chemistry. His detestable self-love was instantly up in arms, and that was my last day of peace.

Very early in the following morning (Tuesday) I found him waiting for me, to ask "whether all ordinary soluble albumenoids were capable of peptonic modification." Fortunately this question was couched in a form to which a single affirmative seemed a sufficient answer, and I gave it unhesitatingly. I could not gather much from his face, and I did not wait to see as I had a train to catch, but I hoped the success of the day's brew would not turn on its correctness.

On Wednesday morning he wanted to know "if I believed in NÄGELI's molecular-physical theory of fermentation!" I felt safer here: nothing could turn upon a mere matter of opinion, and with a firmness born of conscious veracity—for I certainly never believed in anything so preposterously named—I replied in the negative, asking him to kindly tell the cashier to come

to me at once. It was with considerable misgivings that I entered the brewery on Monday, but my mind was already made up, and when MACDONALD button-holed me in the course of the morning, and peering at me over his boulders of cheek-bones desired me to explain to him the old theory that "fermentation was due to oxidising azotised matter acting by catalytic influence on the tertiary sugar," I put him firmly on one side, went home, caught the three o'clock train to Harwich, and was in Rotterdam next morning. It is well to keep a finger on the throbbing pulse of trade, but a clinical thermometer under MACDONALD's tongue, thrust well home, would at the moment have seemed to me even better.

But when one's heart is in any occupation even distance and change of scene build up feeble barriers, and as it happened I was able to go on with my work through making the acquaintance of a Rotterdam brewer. He was no sort of business man, for he would sometimes spend from ten o'clock in the morning to

live at night in his office, and even then have to go again next day, but during such leisure as I had in a month's residence, he instructed me in the Continental decoction or cooking method of brewing, and I took occasion to write to MACDONALD and ask if he did not think this system would lead to larger extracts.

I had no reply and was congratulating myself that this display of technical knowledge had impressed him, when suddenly received a wire from PELOW, "Come at once, something wrong." Anyone less able than PELOW to cope with an emergency I never knew. He met me at the station with the news that MACDONALD had not been seen for several days, and that a letter for me from him had just arrived. It briefly thanked me for my hint about the cooking methods, and said it did enable one to increase the extract. I was a little puzzled about this until GUNTER, at my request, came down to look into the accounts and cash, and then I understood: the cooking was admirably thorough, and the extracts had been enormous.

If I had known GUNTER did not want to come, I would not have invited him; but he should either have refused altogether or come in a better temper. He seemed to think I was in some way to blame, and although this was obviously unreasonable, his jaundiced view of the matter had perhaps some influence in determining a step which I had been meditating for some time, nothing else, in fact, than to do without a manager entirely and do all the work myself.

PELOW endeavoured to dissuade me, saying he did not think I could do it; but I was not to be shaken, and to his further remonstrances replied that at least nobody would suffer but myself. He did not assent to this self-evident proposition, merely making some irrelevant remark to the effect that "he supposed then he could go to the sea-side," but I checked this talk by asking if he meant to leave me in the lurch just when I was undertaking a task which he had himself hinted might prove beyond my strength. I have never denied that PELOW is good-natured, although he lacks enthusiasm and initiative, and I think this touched him. He and GUNTER dined with me that evening, and after dinner I laid before them my plan.

It was this. I would convert my business into a private limited company. GUNTER and PELOW should be the two other Directors, with a merely nominal holding, and receiving the sum of one guinea per board meeting for their services. This was more than GUNTER was worth, but I did not wish to make any invidious distinctions. I would be Chairman, and would give my services gratuitously until the shareholders had received ten per cent. I would myself hold all the shares. Seeing that he was salaried and I was not, PELOW would act as Secretary. Board meetings would be held once a week, the Secretary and one other Director to form a quorum.

I still think that this scheme ought to have worked, for it seemed to me well thought out, but I admit that in practice it did not. In the first place GUNTER's attendance was most irregular. He was only present at ten meetings in the first year, with the result that at only that number was a quorum obtainable. Then PELOW took an exceedingly narrow view of the duties of a Secretary, and was often absent from the brewery for whole days, so that I never really had any trustworthy accounts of what was taking place there. In the next place, I began to receive complaints of the quality of the ale. Several customers complained that it was "hard," and although I gave instructions that softer water should be used this did not seem to produce the desired effect. Another wrote asking with superficial politeness that his next delivery might be first hung on a clothes-line to let the surplus water drip out. The beer began to be returned on our hands to such an alarming extent that I looked into the matter myself, and called in a brewery specialist.

After exhaustive examination, this gentleman gave it as his opinion that if I would give over using my present hops, buy some different malt, change the yeast, and sink a new well for purer water, I should at once feel the benefit, and that then it

would only be necessary to adopt a different principle of brewing and alter my system of fermentation. I paid a heavy fee for this encouragement, and neither PELOW nor GUNTER—although as salaried officials they were more responsible than I was—would contribute a single sixpence towards it.

GUNTER, however, did undertake to make up the year's accounts, and the result was most disheartening, disclosing as it did that the profits were not sufficient to enable the directors' fees to be paid. It is a selfish world, and I could not under the circumstances blame my co-directors for wishing to withdraw; but I might surely have expected that they would do so without levity. A fishing engagement prevented my attending the next Board meeting, but PELOW supplied me with a copy of the resolutions passed at it, which were as follows:—

1. That it has been proved to the satisfaction of the directors that this company, by reason of its liability to the errors of the Chairman, cannot continue its business.
2. That an Extraordinary General Meeting—that is to say a meeting at which the Chairman shall be present—be called to consider the question of liquidation.
3. That the liquid assets, if no better than the sample supplied this day in the Board-room, be drunk by the Chairman.

There was only one way of treating the matter with dignity, and I did that at once. I purchased the one or two shares possessed by the other nominal shareholders, and the business once more became my sole property. A little more, and PELOW would have ruined it.

I had now pretty well exhausted the resources of civilisation in dealing with this matter. It is true I had not tried the co-operative principle, but a brief consideration convinced me that inasmuch as all previous schemes had split upon the rock of my failure to find loyal coadjutors, there would be little hope in that direction. I should doubtless have conquered the difficulty, as I have always done all others, but it happened that just at this time I met MENZIES. MENZIES had been at school with me, but had left comparatively early to take up a position in his father's distillery, and he had spent seven years in that occupation before a crisis in the whiskey trade involved him in ruin. He was now a temperance lecturer.

I came across him through the accident of his delivering in my neighbourhood an address, at which curiosity and the attraction of his name led me to be present. It was a very powerful lecture entitled "Alcohol and Commonsense," and the reasoning by which he demonstrated that if all the money at present spent in drink was expended in the purchase of motor cars (the chief industry of the district) there would be such a demand for those articles as would ruin the trade in horses, was very well received by everyone except the local veterinary surgeon, who left the room. I recalled myself to MENZIES' memory at the conclusion of the proceedings, and he stayed with me for two days: during this time the temperance question was frequently discussed in all its bearings, with the singular result that whilst he convinced me that I ought not to go on profiting by the sale of beer, I convinced him that it was a trade which in the hands of an advocate of teetotalism would be powerful for good.

Under these circumstances a business arrangement seemed possible, and with the help of Messrs. PINTÉ & PUETA, who negotiated a considerable loan, one was ultimately carried out. MENZIES took over my business, paying me (by means of the loan) half the purchase-money in cash, and the balance I left in his hands at 7 per cent., a satisfactory rate of interest. I was very restless while the negotiations and formalities were being carried through, but at length everything was completed, I attached my signature to a number of formidable documents, and walked away from my solicitor's office with the proud consciousness that, if I had sacrificed my prospects, I was no longer profiting by any man's weaknesses.

I think MENZIES must be doing well. He has never objected to the rate of interest, and pays it regularly.